

Office of the Child Advocate
Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board
Data Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 15, 2020
1pm – 2:30pm
Meeting held virtually

Subcommittees Members or Designees Present:

- Kim Occhiuti (DCF)
- Cristina Tedstone (DCF)
- David Chandler (DYS)
- Lydia Todd (CLM)
- Sana Fadel (CfJJ)
- Michael Glennon (Massachusetts District Attorney Association)
- Josh Dohan (CPCS)
- Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court)
- Abigail Averbach (DPH)
- Laura Lempicki (Probation)

Other Attendees:

- Melissa Threadgill (OCA)
- Kristine Polizzano (OCA)
- Alix Rivière (OCA)
- Rowan Curran (DYS)
- Grace Picariello (Rep. Cronin's Office)
- Jessica Lutz (Sen. Eldridge's Office)
- Isabel Lane (Rep. Garlick's Office)
- Other members of the public

Meeting Commenced: 1:05pm

Welcome and Introductions:

Ms. Threadgill welcomed the attendees to the Data subcommittee meeting. Ms. Threadgill introduced the individuals in the WebEx video conference. Individuals on the phone introduced themselves.

Review and Approval of the September Meeting Minutes

Ms. Threadgill asked if anyone had any questions or feedback regarding the September 18, 2020 meeting minutes. The group did not have any additions or corrections.

The September meeting minutes were approved.

Review of the Agenda

Ms. Threadgill explained that this meeting is the final opportunity to review data reporting standard recommendations. She added that the group will also discuss the OCA's analysis of FY20 data.

Final Review of Data Reporting Standards Recommendations

Ms. Threadgill presented feedback from members received during the review period. The first recommendation regarded the importance of highlighting that disparities can also exist for specific intersection of identities, such as gender and race. The group read the proposed drafted language for the Subcommittee's standards to be included in the full Board's legislative report. One person wondered if just stating entities should report intersectional data "when possible" was not firm enough. Another member cautioned that numbers can be so low once intersectional data is analyzed, that it is often unreportable due to confidentiality concerns, and sometimes not helpful for a trend analysis. The group also suggestion using the word "intersectional" instead of "combination." Ms. Threadgill suggested to add a sentence saying that the subcommittee will further examine the topic of data and intersectionality next year. The group agreed.

Next, Ms. Threadgill discussed feedback regarding the need for observation data to be only used when there is no other option. The group discussed adding that observation data should never be used for collecting gender identity, transgender status, intersex status, or sexual orientation.

With no further edits brought forth by the group, a motion is made to vote to send the data reporting standards document for a vote at the JJPAD Full Board meeting. A roll call was held and the following members voted in favor: Josh Dohan (CPCS), David Chandler (DYS), Abigail Averback (DPH), Sana Fadel (CfJJ), Lydia Todd (CLM) and Laura Lempicki (Probation). The following members abstained from voting: Michael Glennon (Suffolk DAO), Cristina Tedstone & Kim Occhiuti (DCF), and Rachel Wallack (Juvenile Court). The standards were thus adopted by this subcommittee and will be voted on by the JJPAD Full Board.

Review and discussion of FY20 Data

Ms. Threadgill explained that some data is still being collected from EOPSS, Juvenile Court, and DMH. She presented a chart explaining which data had been collected and noted that progress had been made from FY 2019. She explained the presentation today looks at data in totals, by gender, race/ethnicity, and severity.

Ms. Threadgill presented overall trends on overnight arrest admissions, applications for complaint, delinquency filings, pre-trial detention admissions, probation, Youth Engaged in Services (YES) Transitions, CRA filings, and admissions to BSAS. Then, she summarized the OCA's key takeaways:

- After a big drop in FY19 following passage of the Criminal Justice Reform Bill, numbers at early process points have generally steadied.
- There were more substantial decreases at the deeper end of the system (e.g. detentions, commitments), continuing multi-year trend.
- There was a significant increase in the use of pre-trial probation.

Then, Ms. Threadgill discussed the potential impact of the pandemic on these data points. She explained there may have been impact on CRA filings due to changes in court practices, and one member mentioned the fact that schools were closed. Additionally, the pandemic may have had an impact on detentions, applications for complaint, delinquency filings, and commitments. Some

members wondered if Care and Protection data will be included in this analysis to see if there is an impact on juvenile justice system involvements. Members also noted there had been a concerted effort to bring detention numbers down. Given that there might not be any jury trials this year due to the pandemic, a member surmised that the number of detentions will most likely be going up in the near future.

Ms. Threadgill presented trends broken down by race and ethnicity. She then summarized the OCA's key takeaways:

- There were no real changes in racial/ethnic disparities at the front-end of the system.
- There was some improvement on disparities at the deeper end of the system—particularly for Latinx youth.
- There is a potential concern regarding the increase in pre-trial probations given racial/ethnic composition. This could be an area for further study.

Members discussed the decrease at the detention admissions level for Latinx and White youth, but an increase for Black youth. The group then discussed possible explanations. In light of the discussion, Ms. Threadgill noted that she will change the takeaways in the report regarding improvements on disparities at the deeper end of the system.

Then, Ms. Threadgill presented trends in data by gender. She then summarized the OCA's key takeaways:

- There are no clear patterns by gender.
- There is a large drop in overnight arrest admissions and detention admissions for females.
- There is a large drop in commitments for males.

Next, Ms. Threadgill presented trends in terms of severity of offense. The OCA's key takeaway from this analysis was that the decreases at the deep end of the system is driven by a decrease in utilization for less serious offenses. She noted that the OCA will add offense category breakdowns for court data for next meeting.

The group discussed reasons why CRA filings decreased instead of—some members hypothesizing – an increase. Ms. Threadgill wondered if, in additions to schools being closed families might have been less likely to file for a CRA because they were isolating at home.

Concluding remarks:

Ms. Threadgill explained that the Full Board will be reviewing the data section of the report at the same time as this Subcommittee, that is, by the end of October. She told members that they can send the OCA thoughts and comments before the next meeting, at which point the group will discuss them together. Ms. Threadgill reminded the group that the next meeting will be held via Webex on November 10, 2020 from 1 to 2:30pm. She thanked the group for their work.

Adjournment: 2:05pm